

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Statement on the Observance of the Hmong New Year

December 18, 2009

Michelle and I extend our warmest wishes to those who are celebrating the Hmong New Year. Over the course of decades, Hmong have come to this country in times of great difficulty, often as refugees escaping persecution. In Southeast Asia, many helped the people of the United States and emigrated here in a period of great strife. Through struggle and sacrifice, they built communities and families and have reminded us of what is best about America. Hmong men and women have come to this country to build a better life, and through their culture and contribution, they have enriched America as well.

The Hmong New Year is traditionally celebrated at the end of the harvest season and marks a time filled with great food, colorful clothes, the music of the *qeej*, and enjoyable games. It is a time for family and community as people gather to bring good luck for the New Year. With that spirit in mind, I wish those celebrating Hmong New Year a prosperous and healthy New Year. *Xyoo tshiab*.

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